

### **Amendments to the Claims**

The below Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

#### **Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended): An apparatus for positioning a workpiece in a spindle of a machine tool and removing a workpiece therefrom, said spindle having an axis of rotation and said workpiece having a centerline extending between a first end surface and a second end surface, said apparatus comprising:

a mechanism for grasping the workpiece in a position proximate said spindle whereby said centerline is coincident with said axis of rotation,

means to move said spindle relative to said workpiece in the direction of said axis of rotation whereby said workpiece is inserted into said spindle or removed from said spindle,

wherein said mechanism includes a first gripping means for gripping the workpiece at the intersection of the first end surface and the centerline, said first gripping means being positionable between an engaged position and a disengaged position.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 21 wherein said first gripping means is located spaced from said spindle.

4. (canceled)

5. (original): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said mechanism includes a second gripping means for gripping the workpiece at the second end surface.

6. (original): The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the second end surface is gripped at the intersection of the second end surface and the centerline.

7. (original): The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said second gripping means is located within said spindle and is positionable therein.

8. (original): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said machine tool comprises a machine for manufacturing gears.

9. (original): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said workpiece is one of a gear or gear blank.

10. (original): The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said gear or gear blank comprises a pinion having a shank.

11. (original): The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the first end surface of said pinion is a front face having a center and the second end surface of said pinion is the end of said shank having a center, the front face center and the shank center defining the centerline.

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)